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IV.—NOTE ON SATYROS, LIFE OF EURIPIDES,
OXYR. PAP. 9, 157-8.

The use of magic in affairs of the heart is almost as old as Cupid himself, and—to judge from cases now and then reported in the daily press—as little in danger of lapsing into innocuous desuetude.

But the value of magic in this important department of human activity was flatly denied at a very early date. The most famous example in the surviving literature of Greece and Rome is the *Andromache* of Euripides. In this play *Andromache* is accused by *Hermione* of using love-potions to alienate the affections of her husband, *Neoptolemus*. She denies the charge, and, among other things, says in substance that in this particular case the plaintiff can blame no one but herself, inasmuch as the only love-potions capable of holding one's husband, the only love-potions any woman needs for that purpose, are not loveliness of face and form, but loveliness of mind and heart. The passage in question—I borrow Dr. Way's version—is as follows (205):

*οὐκ ἐξ ἐμῶν σε φαρμάκων στυγεί πόσις,
ἀλλ' εἰ ξυνεῖναι μὴ ἵπιηδεία κυρεῖς.
φίλτρον δὲ καὶ τόδ' ὃ οὐ τὸ κάλλος, ὦ γύναι,
ἀλλ' ἀρεταὶ τέρπουσι τοὺς ξυνεννέτας.*

Not of my philtres thy lord hateth thee,
But that thy nature is no mate for his.
That is the love-charm: woman, 'tis not beauty
That witcheth bridegrooms, nay, but nobleness.

Of course, we are not to suppose for an instant that *Andromache* sets no value on beauty. On the contrary, she is fully alive, if not acutely sensitive, to the value of it, not only because she is a woman and (at least spiritually) a Greek, but also, and above all, because her opponent is *Hermione*. Her emphatic distinction between outward and inward beauty is not offered as a mere truism in a general way. It has a special application here, a peculiar sting of its own. This is because the plaintiff herself was, beyond all question, a woman of surpassing beauty. All her literary creators unite in telling us so. And do we not know,

too, that she was the daughter of Helen—not to mention the fact that her father was none other than Menelaos, the fair-haired King Arthur of the Homeric epic? But although Hermione inherited much of her mother's beauty, she inherited little or none of her mother's charm. And, like other women in the same situation, she is quite aware that in some way or other her loveliness of form and feature is not adequately seconded by loveliness of mind and heart. Bitterest of all, it is now brought home to her that her victim is also quite aware of it. She deserves a great deal of sympathy. Nevertheless, those of us who are old enough to have observed the part played by temperament in everyday life are probably thankful that we shall never be obliged to live with her.

With Andromache, on the other hand, the balance inclined in the opposite direction. I suppose we must acknowledge that she was not as beautiful as Hermione, or Helen, or some others; indeed, Ovid insinuates—the criticism, however, is purely subjective—that she was too big, that her proportions were too ample. But we are all willing to swear that she *was* beautiful, just the same. Everyone loves Andromache. In fact, the college-boy as I know him—at all events, the college-boy with sufficient taste and intelligence to read Homer and Euripides—is generally ready to stand by her to the last ditch. Only the other day I overheard one of them say to his fellows with great emphasis, 'I just tell you, boys, Andromache was a good sport!' May we not hope—for there are many links between Hellas and Hesperia—that some other friend of hers, some immaterial but kindly ghost, was standing near at the time, and that he has since told her what he heard? If so, and if she ever succeeds in grasping the entire meaning of that compendious but expressive phrase, it ought to warm her heart—even in the realm of dust and shadow.

Like so much else in the dramas of Euripides, the thought expressed by Andromache in the lines I have quoted above is echoed throughout the later tradition, not only of comedy, but also of elegy, of didactic poetry, and even of philosophical discussion.

For example, about a century after Euripides, Menander says (646, K), in a fragment quoted by Stobaios, that—

ἐν ἔστ' ἀληθὲς φίλτρον, εἰγνώμων τρόπος.
τοῦτω κατακρατεῖν ἀνδρὸς εἰωθεν γυνή.

The one and only genuine love-charm is
 A temper sweet and reasonable. With this
 A wife can rule her husband as she will.

It is quite clear, of course, that we are not dwelling here on the higher levels of language and emotion. Nor ought we to expect it—this is comedy, not tragedy. As it stands, too, this more prosaic echo of Andromache's thought is merely a wise saw. But this is because it has been divorced from its original context. We should have quite a different impression of this passage, if we knew the immediate circumstances by which it was suggested, and what turn was given to the old question of love and magic in which it was originally imbedded. Which, by the way, was the speaker—a man or a woman?

However that may be, 'a temper sweet and reasonable' is a precious possession—to anyone. Indeed, one of Menander's own characters says in another place (Monost. 241) that—

θεοῦ πέφυκε δῶρον εὐγνώμων τρόπος.

God gives the temper sweet and reasonable.

But this should by no means discourage those of us who have reason to suspect that we have not received the gift. There is another saying which assures us that—

God helps those who help themselves.

About a century and a half later, the Roman comic poet Afranius, who is known to have been deeply indebted to Menander, says (Frag. 378 R.) that—

*Si possent homines delenimentis capi,
 Omnes haberent nunc amatores anus.
 Aetas et corpus tenerum et morigeratio,
 Haec sunt uenena formosarum mulierum:
 Mala aetas nulla delenimenta inuenit.*

If one might capture men with magic philtres,
 Lovers would swarm round every toothless crone.
 A dainty body, youth, obliging ways—
 These be the philtres handsome women use:
 Old age has none of these—and these are all.

This, too, is merely a fragment, a fragment, however, which was quoted not for its content, but only to illustrate a lexical peculiarity. The original statement of the three necessary qualifications is—

Aetas et corpus tenerum et morigeratio.

Morigeratio, which I rendered 'obliging ways', clearly connotes such modern terms as 'tactfulness' and 'adaptability'. It will be observed that character, as such, is less important than it was in Menander. The speaker is intensely, one might almost say brutally, practical. I suspect that one reason for the difference was because, unlike Andromache and Menander, he was not thinking of the family circle, but rather of those women whose only hold on their lovers is their power to please. Note, too, that we are looking at the old idea from a new angle. The speaker uses it not as a piece of good advice to lovers, but to illustrate the utter hopelessness and futility of old age in affairs of the heart, another theme upon which Antiquity itself rang all the possible changes, and which appeared again with wearisome regularity in the poets of the Renaissance.

Lucretius says nothing of magic. He does not believe in it; moreover, he is an Epicurean philosopher, seriously and intensely interested in the exposition of his system. But he evidently belongs here, and he emphasizes even more than do his predecessors the things that every plain woman should know. Dryden's version is spirited, but not Lucretius. The woman strongly suggests an English country girl of the seventeenth century, and the husband a rakehelly blade of the Restoration drama, rather than the straightforward Romans whom Lucretius has in mind. I therefore give Munro's prose (4, 1278)—

Nec divinitus interdum Venerisque sagittis
 Deteriore fit ut forma muliercula ametur.
 Nam facit ipsa suis interdum femina factis
 Morigerisque modis et munde corpore culto,
 Ut facile insuescat te secum degere vitam.
 Quod superest, consuetudo concinnat amorem;
 Nam leviter quamvis quod crebro tunditur ictu,
 Vincitur in longo spatio temen atque labascit.
 Nonne vides etiam guttas in saxa cadentis
 Umoris longo in spatio pertundere saxa?

Sometimes too by no divine grace and arrows of Venus a sorry woman of inferior beauty comes to be loved; for the wife sometimes by her own acts and accommodating manners [*morigeris modis*] and by elegant neatness of person readily habituates you to pass your life with her. Moreover custom renders love attractive; for that which is struck by oft-repeated blows, however lightly, yet after long course of time is overpowered and gives way. See you not too that drops of water falling on stones after long course of time scoop a hole through these stones.

The comparison is a favorite with Lucretius. But one of my feminine friends wonders whether, if it takes so long in proportion to win a man, the man himself would not be too far gone by the time the process was completed to repay one for one's trouble.

Tibullus, who died young and was never married, is willing to stake his all upon personal beauty. When his Delia was accused of winning him with love-philtres, he replies (1, 5, 43) that—

Non facit hoc verbis, facie tenerisque lacertis
Devovet et flavis nostra puella comis.

'Tis not with words of magic, but with her dainty arms,
Her golden hair, her features, that Delia weaves her charms.

'That is a new proof', remarks the inimitable Jérôme Coignard when these lines are quoted against him in an argument, 'that women are the sworn foes of knowledge. Hence, the wise man ought to beware of having anything to do with them at all'.

We now come to the poet Ovid. Ovid is not blind to the value of beauty. At the same time, he is keenly alive to the fact that it cannot last. In the two passages, however, with which we are concerned, he has assumed for the moment the didactic attitude, and, like every good teacher, he is quite aware that pessimism is never instructive. And then, too, his nature—he was married three times—was inherently buoyant and hopeful. In his poem, therefore, 'On the Care of the Complexion', after dilating on the importance of attending to one's personal appearance, he says to his class of girls (*De Med. Fac.* 35) that—

Sic potius vos urget amor quam fortibus herbis,
Quas maga terribili subsecat arte manus;
Nec vos graminibus nec mixto credite suco
Nec temptate nocens virus amantis equae:
Nec mediae Marsis finduntur cantibus angues,
Nec redit in fontes unda supina suos,
Et, quamvis aliquis Temesaea removerit aera,
Numquam Luna suis excutietur equis.
Prima sit in vobis morum tutela, puellae!
Ingenio facies conciliante placet.
Certus amor morumst: formam populabitur aetas,
Et placitus rugis vultus aratus erit;
Tempus erit, quo vos speculum vidisse pigebit,
Et veniet rugis altera causa dolor.

Love courts you still for these things, not for those herbs of power
 That some old witch has gathered at some uncanny hour;
 These extracts, brews, and simples should all be cast aside,
 Hippomanes is useless, it never should be tried:
 They tell us that the Marsi can burst a snake with song,
 They tell us streams run backward—they lie, or tell us wrong
 And though those frantic cymbals should cease forevermore,
 The Moon would still move onward as safely as before.
 No, ladies, mind your manners—they are your surest arm;
 Your mind must help your beauty, if you would always charm.
 Love fired by that is lasting, your beauty must give place
 To time, and ugly wrinkles plough up that pleasing face;
 'Twill worry you to note them, your glass will vex you sore—
 Another cause for wrinkles—for worry brings you more!

It will be observed with what skill the Beauty Doctor has adapted the old theme to his special purpose.

Again, on another occasion—this time as a professor in the Art of Love—he gives the following excellent advice to his male students (*Ars Amat.* 2, 99)—

Fallitur, Haemonias siquis decurrit ad artes
 Datque quod a teneri fronte revellit equi;
 Non facient, ut vivat amor, Medeides herbae
 Mixtaque cum magicis naenia Marsa sonis:
 Phasias Aesoniden, Circe tenuisset Ulixem,
 Si modo servari carmine posset amor;
 Nec data profuerint pallentia philtia puellis:
 Philtra nocent animis vimque furoris habent
 Sit procul omne nefas! ut ameris, amabilis esto,
 Quod tibi non facies solave forma dabit!
 Sit licet antiquo Nireus adamatus Homero,
 Naiadumque tener crimine raptus Hylas,
 Ut dominam teneas nec te mirere relictum,
 Ingenii dotes corporis adde bonis!
 Forma bonum fragilest, quantumque accedit ad annos,
 Fit minor et spatio carpitur ipsa suo:
 Nec violae semper nec ianthina lilia florent,
 Et riget amissa spina relictæ rosa;
 Et tibi iam venient cani, formosæ, capilli,
 Iam venient rugæ, quæ tibi corpus ærent:
 Iam molire animum, qui duret, et adstrue formæ:
 Solus ad extremos permanet ille rogos.
 Nec levis ingenuas pectus coluisse per artes
 Cura sit et linguas edidicisse duas;
 Non formosus erat, sed erat facundus, Ulixes
 Et tamen æquoreas torsit amore deas:

O! quotiens illum doluit properare Calypso
 Remigioque aptas esse negavit aquas!
 Haec Troiae casus iterumque iterumque rogabat,
 Ille referre aliter saepe solebat idem;
 Litore constiterant: illic quoque pulchra Calypso
 Exigit Odrysii fata cruenta ducis;
 Ille levi virga (virgam nam forte tenebat)
 Quod rogat, in spisso litore pingit opus.
 'Haec' inquit 'Troiaest', (muros in litore fecit)
 'Hic tibi sit Simois; haec mea castra puta!
 Campus erat', (campumque facit) 'quem caede Dolonis
 Sparsimus, Haemonios dum vigil optat equos.
 Illic Sithonii fuerant tentoria Rhesi;
 Hac ego sum captis nocte revectus equis'.
 Pluraque pingebat, subitus cum Pergama fluctus
 Abstulit et Rhesi cum duce castra suo;
 Tum dea 'quas' inquit 'fidas tibi credis ituro,
 Perdiderint undae nomina quanta, vides?'
 Ergo age, fallaci timide confide figurae,
 Quisquis es, atque aliquid corpore pluris habe!

Try no Thessalian potions, give no hippomanes;
 'Tis labor lost for suitors to turn to aids like these;
 Not all the magic simples Medea's self could give,
 Not all the Marsian ditties, can make a passion live:
 The Colchian had kept Jason, the Wanderer's willing arms
 Had still encircled Circe—were love the thrall of charms;
 Eschew them all! For philtres are worse than merely vain:
 They hurt the understanding, they drive a girl insane.
 If you would charm, be charming—a thing which, be assured,
 No face, no form, unaided, has ever yet procured;
 Though you be fair as Nireus, whom Homer loved to sing,
 Or Hylas, whom the Naiads hid in their woodland spring,
 If you would keep your sweetheart, nor wake amazed to find
 Some morning she has left you—you must improve your mind!
 A fragile thing is beauty, and with increasing years
 It must, perforce, diminish—until it disappears;
 The violet and lily are soon enough out-worn,
 The fairest rose will wither—and leave an ugly thorn;
 And you, my handsome fellow, your hair will soon be gray,
 And seams and hateful wrinkles—they, too, are on the way:
 Build up your mind, for beauty some solid prop requires,
 And that alone stands by you until your funeral fires.
 Take pains to be accomplished; a gentleman will find
 Both languages are needful to cultivate the mind:
 Ulysses was not handsome, and yet 'tis evident
 That goddesses adored him—the man was eloquent!
 How oft when he was leaving, Calypso prophesied

A sea too rough and stormy for any boat to ride :
 How oft she craved his story, how oft he told the tale,
 Yet with such art he told it, it never once grew stale.
 Once on a time she asked him—as many times before—
 To tell the death of Rhesus. They stood upon the shore.
 So, with a stick—he held one, it happened, in his hand—
 He pictured out his story upon the hard, wet sand.
 ‘ Now here was Troy ’, he told her, and traced the walls, ‘ and where
 You see this line, the Simois. My camp was over there.
 Here was the field ’—he drew it—‘ where Dolon and his host
 Guarded the Thracian horses ; we slew them at their post.
 And there, the tents of Rhesus ; and this would be the track
 I followed with his horses that night, when I came back ’.
 Here, while he still was drawing, a billow by mishap
 Smote city, camp, and Rhesus—and wiped them off the map !
 ‘ Now, look you ’, cried the goddess, ‘ how can you hope the sea
 That whelms such names as those are, will let you go scot-free ! ’
 So, lovers, ’tis with beauty ; and hence, I bid you seek
 For things of greater value than just a fine physique.

Ovid, like Afranius, is not thinking of the family circle. The students whom he is addressing are the gilded exquisites of the Augustan Age, and the whole poem is really a masterpiece of satire upon the subject with which it professes to deal so seriously. But the humorous and observant Ovid is never so wise, never so well worth remembering, as when he has a twinkle in his eye, and the advice he gives here may be taken to heart by men of all classes and periods. It will be seen, of course, that this passage is merely a rhetorical expansion of our old theme. The poet assumes the conventionalized attitude of the professor and speaks *ex cathedra*. The ironical exaggeration of this didactic attitude is seen in the sly emphasis upon a systematic arrangement and development of topics. For the same reason his pronouncements are purposely axiomatic and familiar, his illustrations purposely traditional and commonplace. The Homeric motive, for instance, of helping out one's story with illustrations, which Ovid himself uses elsewhere, not to mention Tibullus, Plutarch, Macrobius, and doubtless others, was discussed as early as Aristotle. With us the Grave Digger in Hamlet is the classical example of the man who cannot tell a story at all without the aid of diagrams. Doubtless, too, the motive of the waves washing away whatever one writes upon the sand was familiar enough, but, so far as I can remember, this is the earliest appearance of it in the surviving record.

The passages I have quoted are quite enough to show that the value of magic in a love-affair as compared with natural advantages was a well-worn topic in the later literature of Antiquity. We see that it was announced from the stage, discussed in the boudoir, argued in the schools of philosophy, enlarged upon in the schools of rhetoric. It is probably safe to assume that, so far as literary influence is concerned, the fountain head was largely, if not entirely, Euripides. And this, too, despite the fact that earlier authors may have developed the theme.

On the other hand, so far as real life is concerned, it is certain that Andromache was not the first to make the plea that Euripides puts in her mouth. It springs naturally from her situation, a situation that must have begun to make its appearance not long after the first time a jealous woman undertook to remove a real or fancied rival from her path without resorting to personal violence. That was a long while ago, and since then the same situation has been repeated over and over again in all parts of the world. It was not at all unusual in the ordinary life of Antiquity, for in those days the profession of the *lena*, or go-between, included as a matter of course the brewing of love-philtres for her customers. It was common to administer them; still more common to believe—especially in certain nervous disorders, the causes of which were not visible to the popular mind—that they had been administered. Hence, perhaps, the legend of the death of Lucretius, and the contemporary explanation of the homicidal mania of Caligula. Such accusations are a commonplace of the elegiac poets, and in Greek testamentary law the modern plea of ‘undue influence’ was specified either as *ὑπὸ φαρμάκων* or as *γυναικὶ πειθόμενος*. And certainly during the long and relentless prosecution and persecution of witches in the Middle Ages more than one woman has found herself in the plight of Andromache, and—to save her soul from everlasting torment—has been burned alive.

But in our sympathy for Andromache let us not be unjust to Hermione. Hermione here is fairly representative of any mortal woman in the same position. The rôle of plaintiff in this suit is peculiarly trying. Whether she has made her charge in good faith or not, she has been cut to the quick in a most sensitive place, and she cannot reckon on the sympathy of the jury. The magnanimity of a woman capable of rising superior to such a situation would be little short of miraculous. She would deserve

to become an anecdote, and, as such, to be affected by all the peculiarities and privileges of an anecdote, as it wanders on from generation to generation.

We have just heard of such a woman. And, so far as I know, it is the first time she has spoken to the modern world. Our source is Satyros, a Peripatetic philosopher of the second century B. C., considerable fragments of whose *Life of Euripides* have recently come to light among the *Oxyrhynchus Papyri* (Vol. 9, pp. 128-170). In this work, which is in the form of a dialogue, one of the characters, Eukleia—during a discussion, it would seem, of the old question of Euripides' attitude towards the fair sex—says that once upon a time a certain woman was accused of winning the love of Hystaspes by means of philtres. Whereupon [the wife of Hystaspes] sent for her (p. 157)—

μεταπεμφυμένη δὴ τὴν ἄνθρωπον ὅτ' εἰ[δεν] εἰσιούσης τὸ μέγεθος καὶ τὸ κάλλος, 'χαίρε', φησίν, 'γύναι' ψευδεῖς ἄρ' ἢ[σ]αν αἱ [δια]βολαί· σὺ γὰρ [έν] τῷ π[ρ]οσώπῳ τῷ σῶ καὶ τοῖς ὀ[φ]θαλμοῖς ἔχεις τὰ φάρμακα'.

But when she observed her stateliness, as she entered, and her beauty, she said, "Peace be upon you, woman. Truly, the charges against you were false; for you have your philtres in your own face and in your eyes".

A good anecdote. Just the sort of thing we might expect from the mother of a man like the great Darius. But not a new anecdote. Dr. Hunt's note that 'This anecdote of Hystaspes seems to be new' should be replaced, at least for the present, by 'This anecdote seems to be new—of Hystaspes'. About two centuries after Satyros told this story, we find it recorded in Plutarch's *Moralia* (141 B) that once upon a time a certain Thessalian woman was accused of winning the love of Philip of Macedon by means of philtres. Whereupon Olympias, the wife of Philip, sent for her—

ὥς δ' εἰς ὄψιν ἔλθοῦσα τό τ' εἶδος εὐπρεπὲς ἐφάνη καὶ διελέχθη πρὸς αὐτὴν οὐκ ἀγεννῶς οὐδ' ἀσυνέτως, 'χαίρετέωσαν' εἶπεν ἡ Ὀλυμπιάς· αἱ διαβολαί· σὺ γὰρ ἐν σεαυτῇ τὰ φάρμακα ἔχεις'.

But upon her appearance, seeing that not only was she fair to look upon, but that her conversation was refined and sensible, Olympias said, "Away with the charges against you; for you have your philtres in your self".

A good anecdote. Just the sort of thing we might expect from the mother of a man like Alexander the Great. To be sure,

since this beautiful and stately co-respondent parted with her somewhat uncritical Persian lover she had improved her understanding and can talk like a lady; but she is the same girl, and the story is the same story. But that Hystaspes was her first lover is as unlikely as that Philip of Macedon was her last. And when we consider the temperament of anecdotes, as such, we know that we shall never discover the identity of the original parties in this *cause célèbre*.

The truth is that all men in general, and the Peripatetics in particular, are devoted to anecdotes. And with reason, for when anecdotes are good, they possess all the advantages enumerated by Afranius—

Aetas et corpus tenerum et morigeratio.

But, unfortunately, the better anecdotes are the less they are treated with proper respect by their lovers. The trouble is that they are temperamentally prone to over-emphasize *morigeratio*. They are too obliging. Hence, like the Sultan of Babylon's daughter, in Boccaccio's famous story, they wander on and on from one to another. And, again like that errant and erring damsel, they turn up at the end as attractive as ever and as good as new. 'Bocca basciata', as Messer Giovanni himself remarks, 'non perde ventura, anzi rinnuova come fa la luna'. 'A kissed mouth is not impaired, rather renews itself as does the moon'. Good anecdotes appeal to us, not because they are true, or truthful, but because they never fail to have—

Aetas et corpus tenerum et morigeratio.

They fall in with our preconceived notions of what they ought to be.

This is eminently the case with our anecdote. It owed its continued existence and popularity not to its truth, as such—it is not at all certain that it ever was actually true of anyone—but to the fact that it is such a fine illustration of our notion, more or less well-founded, that a boy is the son of his mother rather than of his father. Hence, if we make GM = Great Mother, MF = Mere Father, and GS = Great Son, the formula for a great man should be—

$$GM + MF = GS.$$

Now, substitute for GS Darius, or Alexander, or Rameses, or Hannibal, or Caesar, or Charlemagne, or Tamerlane, or Napo-

leon, or any other man of the same type, call upon the ever obliging anecdote of Satyros and Plutarch (and doubtless others), and we have at once a fine passage for the section devoted to Conquerors in our 'Lives of Illustrious Men', and a striking commentary on Tibullus' distich in which he returns to our traditional theme (1, 8, 23)—

quid queror heu misero carmen nocuisse, quid herbas?
forma nihil magicis utitur auxiliis.

Why dream the youth's undoing is caused by charms, by brews?
No magic arts are practised that beauty needs to use.

It would be interesting to know just why this anecdote of Satyros drifted into his Life of Euripides. One may fairly suspect that the situation in the *Andromache* had something to do with it. But the text preceding our passage is too fragmentary to furnish a definite connection, and for the present at least it seems wiser to leave the matter as it stands. Of course, too, there was more than one Hystaspes. Xerxes, for example, had a brother Hystaspes, whose wife Rhodogune is mentioned by two of the late lexicographers. And, as it now stands, the text of our anecdote is so badly mutilated at the beginning that the more definite designation of our Hystaspes and also the identity of the speaker of the words I have quoted have completely disappeared. In other words, the only surviving term of our formula is 'Hystaspes'. The version of Plutarch, however, makes it quite clear that the original equation in the version of Satyros must have been—

The Wife of Hystaspes + Hystaspes = Darius,

or rather—

The Great Mother of Darius + the Mere Father of
Darius = Darius.

For here, it would seem, as for the most part elsewhere, Hystaspes is known to posterity only as a 'Mere Father'.

KIRBY FLOWER SMITH.

JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY.